



Early Church Collection Volume 4

This volume of the Early Church collection begins with Gregory of Nyssa's defense of the divinity of the Holy Spirit and Eusebius' account of the conclusions of the council of Nicaea. Next comes a poem (rendered in prose) on Easter by Lactantius, full of imagery from nature. Cyprian's exposition of the Lord's Prayer draws on passages from all over the Bible for its short chapters and is followed by an address, occasioned by a plague, reminding Christians that death is not to be feared but longed for. The canons of the second council held at Orange were occasioned by the Pelagian controversy. Gregory Thaumaturgus' 'metaphrase' of Ecclesiastes is a literal translation (in contrast to paraphrase) intended to clarify the meaning of the book. Augustine disputes about the nature of good and evil (whether evil even has a nature) in opposition to the Manichaeans. In 'Concerning Two Souls', Augustine, having just left the Manichaean sect recounts his errors in accepting their dualism, followed by a record of a public dialogue with Fortunatus the Manichaean. Gregory of Nyssa's 'sermon for the day of the lights' treats both the baptism of Christ and of Christians. Chrysostom's homily touches not only the value of private admonition but also a discussion of prayer from the example of Isaac. Gregory of Nyssa next handles a delicate topic with great rhetorical flourish followed by an older English translation of Chrysostom's advice on raising children. The next three pieces address widowhood (including 'On Contenance' - that is, self-control). In 'On Care to be had for the Dead', Augustine answers the question whether 'whether it profits any person after death that his body shall be buried at the memorial of any saint'. Athenagorus, an early Christian apologist, defends the reasonableness of believing in a general resurrection and Athanasius ends the collection with a catalog of psalms for all situations. (Summary by InTheDesert)

Read by In The Desert. Total running time: 14:14:33

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